

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AID-05 SAM-01 CAB-02 COME-00 DOTE-00 EB-07

FAA-00 CU-02 PC-01 /092 W  
----- 124330

R 301500Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6468

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LIBREVILLE 0803

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, PINT

SUBJ: SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE

REF: A) STATE 115637; B) BRUSSELS 3553 (NOTAL);

C) LIBREVILLE 0356

1. SUMMARY: DURING CORDIAL TALK WITH AMBASSADOR MAY 26,  
SAO TOME PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT MEMBER DR. MIGUEL TROVOADA  
(CHARGED WITH EXTERNAL AFFAIRS) DESCRIBED MODERATE EVOLUTION OF  
MLSTP, MOVEMENT'S DESIRE FOR FORMAL RELATIONS WITH U.S. AND  
ISLANDS' NEED FOR ASSISTANCE. TROVOADA DESCRIBED CURRENT  
TIES AND GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN SAO TOME ON ONE HAND  
AND PORTUGAL, ANGOLA AND GABON ON THE OTHER, BUT ALSO  
STRESSED ISLAND'S FIRM INTENTION TO BECOME INDEPENDENT  
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AND FOR IMMEDIATE FUTURE AT LEAST TO REMAIN UNFEDERATED.

DUE LIMITATIONS OF HOUSING AND TRANSPORT, MLSTP DOES NOT INTEND TO ISSUE GENERAL INVITATION TO JULY 12 INDEPENDENCE CEREMONIES. TROVOADA BELIEVES ANGOLAN PROBLEM WILL BE SOLVED ONLY BY FORCE OF ARMS AND WHILE HE LIKE OTHER MLSTP MEMBERS IS PERSONALLY SYMPATHETIC TO CABINDANS' DESIRE FOR INDEPENDENCE BELIEVES ENCLAVE WILL BE ABSORBED BY ANGOLA. END SUMMARY.

2. IN RESPONSE TO AMBASSADOR'S INVITATION, MLSTP LEADER AND SAO TOME PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT MEMBER DR. MIGUEL TROVOADA CALLED AT EMBASSY MAY 26 AND IN FRIENDLY AND HIGHLY ARTICULATE HOUR-ONG SESSION GAVE AMBASSADOR TOUR DE HORIZON OF SAO TOME AFFAIRS. AMBASSADOR LED OFF WELCOMING TROVOADA AND THANKING HIM FOR HIS CALL. THEN DRAWING ON REFTEL A AND PRESIDENT FORD'S REMARKS AT KAUNDA DINNER EXPRESSED SATISFACTION AT ISLAND'S FORTH-COMING INDEPENDENCE AND NOTED OUR DESIRE TO BE HELPFUL WITHIN OUR MEANS. AMBASSADOR ALSO STATED THAT FOR THE MOMENT AT LEAST EMBASSY LIBREVILLE WOULD BE THE LOCUS OF USG CONTACTS WITH THE MLSTP. TROVOADA EXPRESSED THANKS FOR AMBASSADOR'S WORDS AND FOR OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS ISLANDS' AFFAIRS. HE WISHED U.S. TO KNOW THAT MLSTP FULLY UNDERSTOOD FACT OF CLOSE U.S. TIES WITH PORTUGAL MEANT THAT EARLIER CONTACTS BETWEEN US WOULD HAVE BEEN PREMATURE AND MUTUALLY EMBARRASSING. HE THEN DISCUSSED FOLLOWING POINTS.

3. HISTORY OF MLSTP AND ITS CURRENT ORIENTATION - MOVEMENT IS ISLANDS' SOLE POLITICAL PARTY BUT HAS SUCCEEDED IN UNITING WITHIN ITSELF VARIOUS TENDENCIES. AMONG THESE ARE WHAT TROVOADA DESCRIBED AS A PRO-FEDERATION GROUP SET UP WITH PORTUGUESE ENCOURAGEMENT AND "CIVICA" (REFTEL B) WHICH REPRESENTS YOUNG URBAN RADICALS. TROVOADA DISMISSED FORMER AS HAVING NO REAL POPULAR BACKING, AND DENOUNCED LATTER FOR ITS LACK OF REALISM. HE NOTED THAT FORMER PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT MEMBERS TORRES AND UMBELLINI HAD BEEN DISMISSED FOR THEIR VISIONARY DISRUPTIVENESS OF THE MOVEMENT. BOTH MEN ARE NOW ATTACKING THE MLSTP AS A TOOL OF NEO-COLONIALISM THROUGH THE RADICAL LISBON PRESS. TROVOADA LABELED MIGUEL DA GRACA A JOHNNY-CONFIDENTIAL

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COME-LATELY WHO HAD UNTIL RECENTLY HELD ALOOF FROM THE ISLANDS' AFFAIRS. THOUGH MLSTP WILING TO MAKE USE OF DA GRACA'S CONSIDERABLE TALENTS, HE HAS BEEN CAUTIONED ABOUT OPERATING ON HIS OWN AND FORBIDDEN TO SPEAK IN THE MLSTP'S NAME.

4. GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION AND IMMEDIATE PLANS - TROVOADA STRESSED THAT THOUGH MLSTP IS ISLAND'S SOLE

PARTY, IT INTENDS TO ASSURE A MEASURE OF INTERNAL DEMOCRACY BY PROPOSING MULTIPLE CANDIDATES TO VOTERS. POLITICAL BUREAU IS CURRENTLY ELABORATING ELECTORAL LAW AND WILL SOON HOLD ELECTIONS FOR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY WHICH MAY EVENTUALLY BECOME ISLAND'S UNICAMERAL LEGISLATURE. TENTATIVE PLANS ARE TO HAVE A PRESIDENT AND A PRIME MINISTER WITH THE FORMER APPARENTLY SERVING AS BOTH CHIEF OF STATE AND OF GOVERNMENT, BUT WITH THE LATTER HAVING BROAD EXECUTIVE POWERS. BECAUSE OF SEVERE MATERIAL LIMITATIONS (SEE PARA 6 BELOW) MLSTP DOES NOT PLAN TO ISSUE GENERAL INVITATION TO JULY 12 INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATIONS. ONLY REPS FROM PORTUGAL, ANGOLA, GABON, U.N. AND PERHAPS SOME OTHER NEIGHBORS WILL BE INVITED. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION ABOUT POSSIBLE VISIT OF EMBASSY OFFICER TO ISLANDS, TROVOADA SAID VISITOR WOULD OF COURSE BE WELCOME BUT AS ISLANDS STILL TECHNICALLY UNDER PORTUGUESE SOVEREIGNTY, VISIT WOULD HAVE TO BE CLEARED THROUGH LISBON. UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES, MLSTP WOULD PREFER TO SEE SUCH A VISIT DEFERRED UNTIL AFTER INDEPENDENCE. TROVOADA THEN MADE POINT REPEATED ELSEWHERE IN HIS CONVERSATION THAT MLSTP-PORTUGUESE RELATIONS ARE EXCELLENT AND THAT BOTH SIDES BEING VERY CORRECT WITH EACH OTHER.

5. FOREIGN RELATIONS - MLSTP DESIRES RELATIONS WITH ALL NATIONS WITH WHICH IT CAN COOPERATE EFFECTIVELY. THOUGH IT HAS STRONG TIES WITH PORTUGAL, ANGOLA AND GABON, ISLANDS' POPULACE IS DETERMINED TO BE INDEPENDENT. WITH ANGOLA THERE ARE ETHNIC TIES FURTHER STRENGTHENED BY PRESENCE OF ANGOLAN COMMUNITY ON ISLANDS AND OF SOME EIGHT OR NINE THOUSAND SAO TOMEANS IN ANGOLA. THOUGH MLSTP HAS HISTORIC AND EMOTIONAL LINKS WITH MPLA DATING BACK TO PERIOD OF SHARED EXILE IN CASABLANCA IN THE EARLY 60'S, THE MOVEMENT IS ATTEMPTING TO STAND CLEAR  
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OF THE CURRENT IMBROGLIO IN ANGOA (SEE PARA 7 BELOW). AND ALTHOUGH APPRECIATIVE OF GABON'S PAST AND CURRENT ASSISTANCE AND AWARE THAT GABON IS ISLAND'S MOST NATURAL LINK TO AFRICAN MAINLAND, NEITHER MLSTP NOR GABONESE LEADERS SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING FEDERATION.

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

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USIA-06 AID-05 SAM-01 CAB-02 COME-00 DOTE-00 EB-07

FAA-00 CU-02 PC-01 /092 W

----- 124493

R 301500Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6469

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 LIBREVILLE 0803

MLSTP MIGHT IN THE DISTANT FUTURE, HOWEVER, CONSIDER ENTERING SOME SORT OF CUSTOMS UNION OR LOOSE ECONOMIC FEDERATION WITH A COMBINATION OF OTHER WEST AFRICAN STATES. MLSTP IS CURRENTLY NEGOTIATING AVIATION ACCORDS TO PERMIT LIBREVILLE/SAO TOME SERVICE ONCE A WEEK VIA AIR GABON AND TO PROVIDE FOR PASSENGER RIGHTS ON THE LIBREVILLE/SAO TOME PORTION OF THE EXISTING ANGOLAN AIRLINES (TAAG) FLIGHT LUANDA/LIBREVILLE/SAO TOME (REFTEL C).

6. ECONOMIC AFFAIRS - TROVOADA DESCRIBED ISLANDS' ECONOMIC PLIGHT AS SERIOUS. COCOA PRODUCTION HAS FALLEN DUE TO THE DEPARTURE OF MANY PORTUGUESE AND THE CURRENT LOW PRICES FOR COCOA MAKE SITUATION EVEN WORSE. MLSTP HOPES TO ENCOURAGE FRUIT AND VEGETABLE PRODUCTION (ALMOST ALL OF WHICH IS CURRENTLY IMPORTED) AND TOURISM TO PROVIDE  
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BOTH JOBS AND FOREIGN EXCHANGE. A MORE DISTANT RAY OF HOPE COULD BE OIL. A BRITISH PETROLEUM FIRM (UNNAMED) IS REPORTEDLY INTERESTED IN SOME OFF-SHORE ACREAGE, BUT IS WAITING FOR SAO TOME'S INDEPENDENCE TO OPEN FORMAL

NEGOTIATIONS. TROVOADA NOTED RUEFULLY THAT DEPARTING PORTUGUESE ARE TAKING EVERYTHING WITH THEM WHICH PRESENTS SERIOUS PROBLEMS FOR MAINTAINING CERTAIN SERVICES. ISLANDS ARE FOR EXAMPLE PRACTICALLY WITHOUT VEHICLES AND NEGOTIATIONS ARE UNDERWAY WITH THE GABONESE TO PERMIT THE PURCHASE OF VEHICLES DUTY FREE IN LIBREVILLE. SAO TOME POSSESSES ONLY ONE AIRPLANE.

7. ANGOLA AND CABINDA - TROVOADA STATED BLUNTLY THAT ANGOLA'S FUTURE WILL BE SETTLED BY FORCE OF ARMS. AFTER DESCRIBING WELL KNOWN TRIBAL DIVISIONS AND ASSESSING THREE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS HE CONCLUDED THAT MPLA DOES NOT HAVE THE STRENGTH TO OPPOSE THE OTHER TWO. HE ADDED THAT IT WAS MPLA'S INABILITY OR UNWILLINGNESS TO REALISTICALLY ASSESS ITS CAPACITIES WHICH HAD IN LARGE MEASURE CAUSED THE RECENT FIGHTING IN ANGOLA. MLSTP MEMBERS ARE PERSONALLY SYMPATHETIC TO CABINDA'S DESIRE FOR INDEPENDENCE (TROVOADA STATED FLATLY THAT ALL CABINDANS WOULD PREFER TO BE INDEPENDENT), BUT BELIEVE IT A LOST CAUSE BECAUSE OF FLEC'S DISORGANIZATION, ANGOAN STRENGTH AND OAU'S AVOWED OPPOSITION TO BALKANIZING FORMER COLONIAL TERRITORIES.

8. COMMENT: TROVOADA MAKES AN EXCELLENT IMPRESSION. HE IS ARTICULATE AND APPEARS TO BE BOTH REALISTIC AND MODERATE. HE HAS A CLEAR-EYED APPRECIATION OF THE ENORMOUS ECONOMIC PROBLEMS WHICH FACE THE ISLANDS. TOGETHER WITH ANUMBER OF OTHER MLSTP MEMBERS, HE IS APPARENTLY STRIVING SUCCESSFULLY TO EXCLUDE EXTREMIST ELEMENTS FROM THE GOVERNMENT, WITH THE GOAL OF ESTABLISHING A MODERATE SOCIALIST REGIME. ON THE OTHER HAND, THERE ARE OTHER DISQUIETING SIGNS WHICH MAY NOT AUGUR WELL FOR THE FUTURE POLITICAL ORIENTATION OF THE ISLANDS. EMBOFF WHO WENT TO MLSTP LIBREVILLE HEADQUARTERS TO ARRANGE TROVOADA'S CALL ON AMBASSADOR SAW LARGE AMOUNTS OF COMMUNIST LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL WORKS ON MARXISM IN EVIDENCE, AND WE HAVE HEARD REPORTS THAT VARIOUS MEMBERS

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OF THE MLSTP HAVE STRONG CONNECTION IN EASTERN EUROPE. AGAIN ON THE PLUS SIDE, HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE THAT PRESIDENT BONGO (AND ALSO AHIDJO) WILL EXERCISE A MODERATING INFLUENCE ON MLSTP. BONGO IS PARTICULARLY WELL PLACED BECAUSE HE IS CURRENTLY BANKROLLING THE MOVEMENT AND GABON PRESENTS THE BEST LINK TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD.

9. ACTION RECOMMENDED: BELIEVE WE ARE OFF TO A GOOD START IN OUR DIALOG WITH SAO TOME AND THAT WE SHOULD CONTINUE INFORMAL CONVERSATIONS WITH MLSTP TO FLESH OUT OUR

UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR NEEDS AND INTENTIONS, LEADING  
TO EVENTUAL FORMAL RECOGNITION. DEPARTMENT AND OTHER  
WASHINGTON AGENCIES MAY WISH NOW TO BEGIN CLARIFYING  
EXACTLY WHAT IT IS WE ARE PREPARED TO OFFER POST-  
INDEPENDENT SAO TOME. ON THIS END, PAO IS REQUESTING  
PORTUGUESE LANGUAGE MATERIALS FOR PRESENTATION AND WILL  
BE MAKING A PROPOSAL FOR A CU LEADER GRANTEE FROM THE  
ISLANDS FOR FY '76. ALSO ONE OF OUR PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS  
WAS APPROACHED BY MLSTP MEMBERS FOR POSSIBLE PEACE CORPS  
PROGRAM ON ISLANDS AND THIS IS BEING REPORTED TO WASHINGTON  
BY THE PC/D. DEPARTMENT MAY ALSO WISH TO MAKE NECESSARY  
BUDGET ARRANGEMENTS TO ENABLE LIBREVILLE OFFICERS TO TRAVEL  
PERIODICALLY TO SAO TOME IF INDEED THIS EMBASSY WILL  
EVENTUALLY HANDLE OUR RELATIONS ON A NON-RESIDENT BASIS.  
MCKESSON

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** MILITARY ASSISTANCE, LIBERATION MOVEMENTS, DEPENDENCIES, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 30 MAY 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** ElyME  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D750190-0027  
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**Legacy Key:** link1975/newtext/t1975056/aaaaaevv.tel  
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**Office:** ACTION AF  
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**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
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**Page Count:** 6  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 75 STATE 115637, 75 BRUSSELS 3553  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** ElyME  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 17 APR 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <17 APR 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <06 OCT 2003 by ElyME>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
05 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE  
**TAGS:** PFOR, PGOV, PINT, SAO TOME, (DE GRACA, MIGUEL)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006